

Contributions.

FORESHADOWINGS OF CHRIST.

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The Holy Bible is God's revelation to mankind of the unfolding or growth of the divine plan of redemption from the first germ to its complete consummation.

Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, is the center of our religion. He is the Redeemer, and it is for the purpose of completely revealing his relation to us and eternity, that God has given us the Bible. Everything in this divine book points to him who died on the cross to redeem a sinful world. Everything before him pointed to the time when he would come and everything after him points back to him as the center from which all radiate.

We find Christ in the opening chapters of the Bible, we find him in the books of the prophets, and we find him in the record of God's chosen people. Goodspeed has said, "The essential element in Hebrew history does not lie in the disclosure of a general providence working through the events and experiences of the Hebrew nation, nor in the light which these throw upon the universal principles of human government and society, but rather in the fact that Hebrew history reveals the working out of the divine purpose of salvation for the race." It is the record of the preliminary stages of this salvation, as found in the Old Testament, that forms the subject of our present study.

There are several methods that might be pursued in the study of this subject, but perhaps the best for our present purpose is the historical method. We shall study the growth of the hope or expectation of a Redeemer from the first vague promise given to Eve in the garden of Eden to the more complete revelation of what the Redeemer was to be as given to the prophets of later times. We will not, cannot, be exhaustive, but merely suggestive. We will pick up the thread here and there and note the growth of this hope as we go along.

By pursuing this study in this way, we discover a chain, a tie, binding all of the Old Testament together and uniting it with the New. We will see the Bible as an organic whole. The books of the Bible are not parts of the whole as bricks are parts of a wall, but as the roots, trunk, and branches are parts of a tree. Each is necessary to the others and derives its own strength from the others.

In our study we will find that the Old Testament forms the basis of a religion, not for Jews only, but for all nations,

whether white, black, red, brown, or yellow. The Messiah was sent to all.

Man was created with great privileges; he was created in the image of God, and then put into a world exactly suited to his wants and given the privilege of ruling that world. The Lord told him to subdue the earth and have dominion over all that liveth upon it. It was man's God-given privilege to rule this world completely, but he has succeeded only in parts. He does rule many beasts, birds, and fishes; he has made the mountain stream his servant, and electricity carries his messages and drives his cars; yet, his victory is not complete. He must earn his very existence by a life-long struggle. Toil, misery, and pain accompany him all through this world. He is ushered into this world by the agony of the mother, and passes through the toil, sorrow and pain of this life and is finally driven out of it by the pangs of death.

Why is it that man, whom God commanded to rule this whole earth should thus be brought into subjection to it?

The problem is solved in the conduct of the human race itself. The first pair were put on this earth sinless and with power to conquer and control all that there was on the earth to conquer, but they wilfully disobeyed God's just and reasonable command and yielded to what should have been, and was, their subject. Having thus yielded to this evil subject they could not get him under their control again. And what did God say and do? He cursed the evil one and said: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." Gen. 3:15.

Here was the beginning of the long struggle. Mankind was no longer to rest in peace but must carry on a constant warfare with the serpent. Not without injury to himself for the heel of man was to be bruised, but he had the blessed promise that in the end victory would come and the serpent's head be bruised.

God said nothing of how long this struggle was to last, so Eve looked for the Deliverer in her day, and when a son was born to her she said: "I have got the man from the Lord." She thought that her own son was to deliver the world from its sins but she was disappointed. It was God's will that several centuries should pass away before the serpent's head and the heel of the son of man be bruised on Calvary. It was to be a long struggle and mankind suffered much at the hands of the tempter, but God was always ready to help those who called upon him for help.

From the very beginning the human

race divided itself into two classes, those who sought God's guidance, and those who rebelled against him. It was through those that sought God's guidance that the Redeemer was to come, and it is of them that the Old Testament treats. The history of the rebellious portion of the human race is dropped because it has no relation to the coming Messiah.

Cain and his descendants rebelled against God so his history is dropped that the history of Seth might be followed closely. Seth and his descendants represent the best that there was in humanity at that time. Enoch walked with God and was translated into another life, and with Noah came the hope of comfort concerning the toil and sorrow caused by the fall. He found grace in the sight of the Lord and for his sake, the human race was saved from destruction, and the curse pronounced upon the ground was revoked.

After God had swept the wicked off of the face of the earth by the flood he again charges the human race in the person of Noah to subdue the earth. And Noah is a type of a true citizen inasmuch as he obeyed. He became a husbandman and caused the ground to minister to his wants. He began faithfully the great work of conquering the earth, but he yielded to what he had conquered and became a servant of the wine that he himself made.

The consequences of his evil doings involved his descendants, but with the curse that followed came a promise. "God shall enlarge Japheth and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem." Gen. 9:27.

There has been some dispute as to whom is meant by "he." Does it refer to Japheth or God? We believe it refers to God. Jehovah is not only Shem's God, but he is to dwell in his tent. For the first time it is promised that God will dwell with man. Mankind is given the hope of fellowship with God. The promise not only tells that he will come but it tells where he will come. He is to dwell in the tents of Shem.

The promise is made still more definite to Abraham, Gen. 12:3, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Here the promise is made to affect the whole earth. God did not select and train his chosen people for their own sakes only, but that through them all the families of the earth might be blessed.

The promise given to Abraham was repeated to Isaac and Jacob, and we have reasons to believe that they looked forward eagerly to the time when these promises would be fulfilled. At the time of his death, Jacob was permitted to look still deeper into the future, and see the Messiah come from the tribe of Judah.